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**From:** Katie Kolokithas <kkolokithas526@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 27, 2016 9:50 AM  
**To:** Mary Lou Terrien  
**Subject:** HB 5232 Testimony

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I am a constituent from Livingston County and I want to let you know my opinion of the newly introduced HB 5232 on amending the local historic districts act in Michigan. I am extremely disappointed by this bill's language, the untrue information that has been put out in the media by the bill's sponsor, as well as the speed at which certain individuals seem to want to push this through without hearing from the citizens who care about Michigan's Historic resources. I am unable to attend the hearing today due to the short notice and prior work commitments which is likely the point in rushing things (so that fewer individuals have time to comment) but I wanted to make sure my opinion is still heard.

PA 169 of 1970 is an important tool for both preservationists and businesses alike. Historic places are a huge economic development tool for not only the State of Michigan but the entire United States. Historic sites in Michigan bring in tourists, draw new residents and have created a sense of place that cannot be replicated. Since its inception in 1970 over 78 local communities have decided to take a proactive step in protecting some of these historic resources and the historic fabric that makes so many of our city's great by enacting local historic districts (and often times more than one district are located in many of these city's). As a constituent of your district, I want you to know that historic places are important to me and I would be disappointed in any legislator who decides to vote for these changes.

The proposed changes will weaken the protection that these districts provide by altering the process for removal of districts, reducing the historic district commissions reliance on the best practice standards that have been developed for a distinct purpose, and change the process for an aggrieved property owner. The first issue, would allow local legislative bodies to eliminate districts without any guidelines or justification, and without community input. This means that a local official who is getting pressure from a developer or other private interest can eliminate a district without any community support or input. The proposed changes to the appeal process would mean that appeals would be heard on a local level where political or development pressures could alter the outcome instead of having the appeals heard by a neutral state board.

The proposed measures for passing a district are devastating to any local communities who are trying to protect a treasured community landmark and impose unnecessary and substantial costs upon municipalities, even those with existing districts. By making the municipality vote every 10 years on whether to retain a previously established district is absurd and this entire bill screams of a powerful individual who wants to remove their home from an established district. I do not buy into the personal property rights statements that the bills sponsor uses for this basis for this proposed legislation. If you do not want to live in a vibrant, successful neighborhood with higher property values that also asks for some concessions from its residents to retain the features that make it so successful then do not purchase a home in a local district. It is fairly simple to avoid these local districts if you do not want to deal with the process.

The United States is far behind other countries in protecting our historic properties and it shows in the landmarks that have been torn down in Michigan and around the country over the last 60 years. I am unable to make it to the hearing today to give my testimony in person due to work conflicts but I would like you to be aware that many constituents care about this and are watching carefully what happens. If you would like to learn more about this issue so near to my heart please check out [www.mhpn.org](http://www.mhpn.org) for more information.

Thank you for your consideration,



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Katie Kolokithas

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